

A complete set of Umayyad gold dinars and other coins of the Islamic World

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Album	Album, S., <i>A Checklist of Islamic Coins: Second Edition</i> , Santa Rosa, 1998
ANS	<i>American Numismatic Society</i>
Artuk	Artuk, I. and C. Artuk, <i>İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Teşhirdeki İslâmi Sikkeler Kataloğu</i> , 2 volumes, Istanbul, 1971-1974
Bernardi	Bernardi, G., 'Il dinar di `Abd al-Malik coniato nell'anno 77h,' <i>Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau</i> 65 (1986), pp. 131-137
BMC	Lane-Poole, S., <i>Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum</i> , 10 volumes, London, 1875-1890
Cairo	Nicol, N.D., et al., <i>Catalogue of the Islamic Coins, Glass Weights, Dies and Medals in the Egyptian National Library, Cairo</i> , Malibu, 1982
Gaube	Gaube, H., <i>Arabosasanidische Numismatik</i> , Brunswick, 1973
Klat	Klat, M.G., <i>Catalogue of the Post-Reform Dirhams: The Umayyad Dynasty</i> , London, 2002
Lavoix	Lavoix, H., <i>Catalogue des monnaies musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale</i> , 3 volumes, Paris, 1887-1896
Lowick	Lowick, N. and E. Savage, <i>Early Abbasid Coinage: A Type Corpus 132-218H / AD 750-833</i> , typescript, no date
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Miles, <i>Fatimid</i>	Miles, G.C., <i>Fatimid Coins</i> , ANS Numismatic Notes and Monographs no. 121, New York, 1951
Miles, <i>Rayy</i>	<i>idem</i> , <i>The Numismatic History of Rayy</i> , New York, 1936
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Pere	Nuri Pere, <i>Osmanlılarda Madeni Paralar</i> , Istanbul, 1968
SICA	<i>Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean:</i> Volume I: Album, S. and A. Goodwin, <i>The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period</i> , Oxford, 2002 Volume X: Album, S., <i>Arabia and East Africa</i> , Oxford, 1999
Treadwell	Treadwell, L., <i>Buyid Coinage: A die corpus (322-445 A.H.)</i> , Oxford, 2001
Walker	Walker, J., <i>A Catalogue of the Muhammadan Coins in the British Museum</i> , 2 volumes, London, 1941 (reprinted 1967) and 1956
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ARAB-SASANIAN COINAGE

The earliest coins struck by the Muslims were based on types already in circulation in the lands they conquered. In the former Sasanian empire these were chiefly silver drachms - broad, wafer-like coins weighing slightly over 4 grams. At first the Muslims made only minimal modifications to the Sasanian designs, adding a short religious phrase in the obverse margin but retaining the bust and name of the Sasanian king and using the Persian Pahlawi script for the mint and date. A gradual series of changes over a period of thirty or forty years gave the coinage a more distinctively Islamic appearance. Hijri dates were used instead of the older Sasanian dating system based on the dead king Yazdgird III's regnal years, names of Arab governors replaced the name of the Sasanian king, and Arabic script began to supplant Pahlavi. Eventually the Umayyad caliph `Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (65-86h) introduced a series of reforms to the gold and silver coinage in the mid-70s, and by about 84h the issue of drachms of Arab-Sasanian type was almost entirely confined to local coinages in the far east of the Islamic world.

Roughly forty or fifty individuals (governors, caliphs and rebels) are named on Arab-Sasanian drachms during their main period of issue. The selection offered here includes a number of scarce and rare types, including what is believed to be the second published example of a drachm of the rebel `Abdallah b. `Amir al-Mujashi`i (lot 10).



#1
Muqatil b. Misma`, drachm, BYŠ (Bishapur) 73h, *obv.* margin, in second and third quadrants: *bismillah* / *bakriyya*, 3.84g (SICA I, 190), *good very fine* £250-300

The word *bakriyya* on this coin refers to the name of Muqatil b. Misma`'s tribe. It is the only appearance of a tribal name on Arab-Sasanian coinage.



#2
`Abd al-`Aziz b. `Abdallah b. `Amir, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 66h, *obv.* margin, in second and third quadrants: *bismillah* / *al-`aziz*, counter-marked in fourth quadrant *jayyid*, 4.06g (Walker p.96, Cam.7), *reverse with old ink-mark and graffiti*, *good very fine and rare* £200-300

`Abd al-`Aziz was appointed governor of Sijistan in 66h, where he fought, defeated and killed the native ruler of Kabul.



#3
`Abdallah b. Umayya, drachm, SK 77h, *obv.* margin, in second and third quadrants: *bismillah* / *al-`izza lillah*, 3.90g (SICA I, p.33, note 185), *good very fine*, *small flan lamination in reverse margin*, *rare* £250-300

The son of Umayya b. `Abdallah (a relative of the caliph `Abd al-Malik b. Marwan), `Abdallah was placed in charge of Sijistan at the time of his father's unsuccessful expedition into Khurasan in 74h. His rare drachms are the earliest Islamic coins to bear the phrase *al-`izza lillah*.



4

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja`a, drachm, ART (Ardashir Khurra) 75h, 3.78g (SICA I, 34, *same obverse die*), *areas of corrosion on both sides where chloride deposits have been removed, otherwise almost extremely fine* £300-350

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja`a, the last leader of the Azraqi Kharijites, was celebrated as a poet and orator. Appointed 'caliph' of the Azraqis in 69h, he was able to lead his forces from their base in Kirman into Iraq where, for a while, they threatened Basra. By the time this coin was struck in 75h he had been checked by the general al-Muhallab b. Abi Sufra, and was finally killed in the late 70s (probably 78 or 79h). His drachms all bear the Kharijite slogan *la hukma illa illah* (There is no judgment but from God) in the obverse margin.



5

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja`a, drachm, BYŠ (Bishapur) 75h, 3.80g (SICA I, 193ff), *almost very fine*

£300-350



6

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja`a, drachm, TART (Tawwaj) 75h, 4.19g (SICA I, p.30, note 168), *toned, almost extremely fine, rare*

£500-600



7

al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, drachm, DA+P (Fasa) 71YE=83/84h, of standard Arab-Sasanian type with governor's name in **Pahlawi**, 4.03g (Walker p.119, Th.16), *about extremely fine and rare* £800-1,200

Most drachms of al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf bear his name in Arabic on the obverse and are the first such coins to do so. This issue is in fact more conservative in design than al-Hajjaj's earlier Arabic types, even though it is his latest-known by at least two years. Like the very earliest Arab-Sasanian drachms his name is written in Pahlawi script (one of only two issues of al-Hajjaj where this is the case), and uniquely among his drachms the date is expressed in terms of the Yazdgird era instead of a Hijri year.



8

`Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad (Ibn al-Ash'ath), drachm, DA+RA (uncertain location in Darabjird), 70YE=82/83h, *obv.*, with long marginal legend *bismillah / rabb harasahu* in second and third quadrants, 4.08g (Gauze 39, *same dies*, where mint incorrectly given as DA), *traces of hornsilver, otherwise extremely fine and very rare* £600-800

The descendant of a noble Yemeni family, Ibn al-Ash'ath was also the nephew through marriage of the famous governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf. Relations between the two men were friendly at first but gradually became increasingly strained. In 80h, despite warnings that his nephew might revolt, al-Hajjaj nevertheless appointed Ibn al-Ash'ath to lead an army into eastern Sijistan where Zunbil, ruler of Kabul, had previously defeated a force under `Ubaydallah b. Abi Bakra. The expedition was a success but led to further friction between al-Hajjaj and Ibn al-Ash'ath, who made a pact with Zunbil and rebelled against his uncle in 81h. At first al-Hajjaj was driven back as the rebel forces briefly occupied Basra and Kufa. Gradually, however, he was able to halt their advance and, after a series of skirmishes and battles, al-Hajjaj defeated the rebel forces decisively in 83h.

The defeated Ibn al-Ash'ath fled to Sijistan, where he died in 85h. According to one account he threw himself from the battlements of a castle rather than be handed over to al-Hajjaj.



9

`Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 83h, 3.99g (SICA I, p.30, note 165), *good very fine, scarce*

£250-300



10

`Abdallah b. `Amir al-Mujashi'i, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 80h, *obv.* margin, in third and fourth quadrants: *الله ولي عبدالله / بن عامر*, *rev.*, in fourth quadrant of margin: *سليم*, 3.50g (cf Sotheby's, 25 May 2000, lot 233 = SICA I, p.31, note 175), *traces of hoard-staining in margins, very fine to good very fine, extremely rare* £2,500-3,000

When Ibn al-Ash'ath led his army into eastern Sijistan against Zunbil as described above, he named a certain `Abdallah b. `Amir al-Mujashi'i to govern in his absence. However, it appears that Ibn al-Ash'ath and al-Mujashi'i had quarrelled shortly before this and, although they were subsequently reconciled, the circumstances under which this drachm was struck are therefore unclear. Whilst it is perhaps more likely that the coin dates from the time of al-Mujashi'i's rule in Sijistan as Ibn al-Ash'ath's deputy, it might also have been issued as a statement of his independence during their dispute.



‡11
Amr b. Laqit, drachm, GRM-KRMAN (uncertain location in Kirman) 83h, 4.07g (SICA I, p.34, note 191), *almost extremely fine and rare*
 £400-600

Amr b. Laqit's few known drachms are all from mints in Kirman, where he acted as Ibn al-Ash'ath's deputy. All are dated 83h.



‡12
Amr b. Laqit, drachm, KRMAN-AN (also an uncertain location in Kirman) 83h, 4.06g (SICA I, p.34, note 191), *minor edge damage where corrosion has been removed, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare*
 £400-600



‡13
Arab-Khwarezm, al-Fadl b. Sahl (as Dhu'l-Riyasatayn), drachm, head of king right, *rev.*, horseman advancing right and brandishing weapon, *Dhu'l-ri / yasadayn* in two lines behind rider, Aramaic legend below, 1.71g (Artuk 21 = Mitchiner, *IGISC* 500b), *edge chipped but very fine for issue, rare*
 £700-900

POST-REFORM Umayyad GOLD COINAGE



Umayyad dinar, year 77h (*enlarged*)

14

A complete set of fifty-six post-Reform Umayyad dinars, comprising an example of each year from 77h to 132h inclusive, generally in excellent condition and including a superb example of the celebrated 'year 77', only the second complete set of Umayyad dinars to be offered at auction (56) £180,000-220,000

The famous 'year 77' dinar, issued by the caliph `Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, is generally considered to be the first purely Islamic coin. Its design and inscriptions set a pattern for Islamic dinars which lasted until the fall of the Umayyads and whose influence can be seen on coins issued centuries later. Apart from the date on the reverse, the legends remain unchanged throughout the fifty-six years these coins were struck, but examination of a set such as this reveals many subtle changes in style and calligraphy with a gradual change from a small, rounded script with clear Pahlawi influence to a more angular form of Iraqi Kufic.

From an historical perspective, the establishment of a uniform and distinctively Islamic coinage system represents a key stage in the creation of a stable Islamic state. During the early years of conquest and expansion, the victorious Muslims had wisely left existing social and political institutions largely untouched. Over time, however, priorities inevitably shifted towards settlement and government, and it became important that the Islamic lands should become administered in a distinctively Islamic way which followed the precepts of the Holy Qur`an. With its central role both in taxation and in the payment of troops, the coinage had a prominent part to play in this process.

Monetarily, the territory controlled by the Muslims at this time comprised two distinct areas. The erstwhile Byzantine provinces in the West had maintained a bimetallic system based on the gold solidus and the copper follis. The Sasanian empire had issued only small quantities of gold and copper coins, relying instead on a plentiful supply of silver drachms which the Muslims had continued to strike in a modified form. Establishing a single coinage system for both areas was a highly visible statement of unified Muslim control: a symbolic as well as a practical measure.

`Abd al-Malik's coinage reforms are still not fully understood, but it appears that in the early 70s he began to issue experimental gold and silver coins. Several different types of solidi were struck, all clearly based on Byzantine issues but with minimal modifications to remove obviously Christian symbols. Indeed, these 'transitional' dinars give a strong impression that the Muslims were still trying to copy Byzantine solidi as closely as possible. Few of them survive today, and it seems unlikely that they were ever produced in large quantities.

This conservative approach to coinage design was dramatically reversed in the year 77h, when `Abd al-Malik introduced a dinar of a radically new type. Purely epigraphic, the new coin replaced modified crosses and images of emperors or caliphs with verses from the Qur`an rendered in austere Kufic script. The weight of the coin was also changed from that of the Byzantine solidus to the *mithqal* of approximately 4.25g. As dinars of the earlier Byzantine type dated 77h are also known, this gives the impression of an abrupt change in policy for reasons which remain unclear. Mediaeval Arab writers stress the religious aspects of `Abd al-Malik's coinage reforms rather than their economic significance, while ancient and modern authors have suggested a link between these reformed dinars and a new series of Byzantine solidi, issued at approximately the same time, which were the first to depict the facing bust of Christ.

The dinars are listed in full below, giving individual weights, references and the condition of each piece:

77h	4.31g	Walker 186; Bernardi dies e/D	<i>Almost extremely fine</i>
78h	4.27g	Walker 187-188	<i>Light graffiti, almost extremely fine</i>
79h	4.28g	Walker 189	<i>Almost extremely fine</i>
80h	4.29g	Walker 190	<i>Edge marks, about extremely fine</i>
81h	4.26g	Walker 191	<i>Good very fine</i>
82h	4.26g	Walker 192	<i>Almost extremely fine</i>
83h	4.24g	Walker 193	<i>Extremely fine</i>
84h	4.26g	Walker 194	<i>Extremely fine</i>
85h	4.29g	Walker 195-196	<i>Extremely fine</i>
86h	4.27g	Walker 197	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
87h	4.29g	Walker 198	<i>Extremely fine</i>
88h	4.26g	Walker 199	<i>Extremely fine</i>
89h	4.32g	Walker 200	<i>About extremely fine, minor scrapes both sides</i>
90h	4.30g	Walker 201	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
91h	4.31g	Walker 202	<i>Extremely fine, graffiti on reverse</i>
92h	4.27g	Walker 204	<i>Extremely fine</i>
93h	4.30g	Walker 205-206	<i>Extremely fine</i>
94h	4.27g	Walker 207	<i>About uncirculated</i>
95h	4.25g	Walker 209	<i>Minor obverse graffiti, about uncirculated</i>
96h	4.26g	Walker 210	<i>About extremely fine</i>
97h	4.28g	Walker 212	<i>Extremely fine</i>
98h	4.27g	Walker 213	<i>About uncirculated</i>
99h	4.27g	Walker 214	<i>Extremely fine</i>
100h	4.28g	Walker 216	<i>Lustrous, almost as struck</i>
101h	4.27g	Walker 218	<i>About uncirculated</i>
102h	4.27g	Walker 219	<i>About uncirculated</i>
103h	4.26g	Walker 220-221	<i>Lustrous, almost as struck</i>
104h	4.24g	Walker 223	<i>Good very fine</i>
105h	4.24g	Walker 224	<i>Good very fine, obverse slightly double-struck</i>
106h	4.25g	Walker 225-226	<i>About uncirculated</i>
107h	4.24g	Walker 227	<i>Almost extremely fine with traces of lustre</i>
108h	4.28g	Walker 228-228a	<i>Good extremely fine</i>
109h	4.24g	Walker 229	<i>Good extremely fine, faint marks on reverse</i>
110h	4.27g	Walker 230	<i>Extremely fine</i>
111h	4.26g	Walker 231	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
112h	4.26g	Walker 232	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
113h	4.25g	Walker 233	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
114h	4.26g	Walker 234	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
115h	4.29g	Walker 235	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
116h	4.25g	Walker 236	<i>Practically as struck</i>
117h	4.26g	Walker 237	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
118h	4.26g	Walker 238	<i>Almost extremely fine</i>
119h	4.26g	Walker 239	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
120h	4.27g	Walker 240	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
121h	4.27g	Walker 241	<i>Practically as struck</i>
122h	4.28g	Walker 242	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
123h	4.26g	Walker 243	<i>Extremely fine</i>
124h	4.26g	Walker 244	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
125h	4.27g	Walker 245	<i>Practically as struck and fully lustrous</i>
126h	4.28g	Walker 246	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
127h	4.18g	Walker 247	<i>Edge smoothed, extremely fine</i>
128h	4.26g	Walker 248	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
129h	4.27g	Walker 249	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
130h	4.27g	Walker 250	<i>Extremely fine</i>
131h	4.26g	Walker 251	<i>Almost uncirculated</i>
132h	4.26g	Walker 252	<i>Extremely fine</i>

POST-REFORM Umayyad SILVER COINAGE

Production of silver dirhams to complement `Abd al-Malik's new and distinctively Islamic gold coinage began in 78h. Like the dinars, these were purely epigraphic in design and were struck to a different weight standard to that of the older Arab-Sasanian drachms. Unlike the gold coins, however, virtually all Umayyad dirhams also indicate the name of the mint where each was struck. More than one hundred mints are now recorded, of which several are only known from one or two specimens while many others are rare. Geographically, dirham mints were active throughout the Islamic world, from Spain to the north-west coast of India.



15
Umayyad, dirham, Madinat Balkh al-Bayda 111h, 2.83g (Klat 176), *generally very fine, the obverse slightly better* £700-900

This is the earliest known dirham from the mint of Balkh, here described as 'the white city'.



‡16
Umayyad, dirham, al-Jazira 126h, 2.71g (Klat 222, *same dies*), *very fine to good very fine and rare* £1,200-1,500



17
Umayyad, dirham, Ramhurmuz 96h, 2.58g (Klat 389), *lightly clipped, old scratch in obverse field, otherwise very fine and a very rare date for the mint* £700-900



‡18

Umayyad, dirham, Sabur 83h, 2.91g (Klat 419), *traces of hornsilver, good very fine and a very rare date*

£600-800



19

Umayyad, dirham, Sijistan 99h, 2.81g (Klat 441), *reverse struck from a worn die and with a few old scratches, otherwise very fine or better and extremely rare*

£2,000-2,500



20

Umayyad, dirham, Sijistan 130h, variety with four pairs of annulets in obverse margin, 2.77g (Klat 448.b), *good very fine/very fine, rare*

£1,200-1,500



21

Revolutionary Period, `Abdallah b. Mu`awiya (127-130h), dirham, Istakhr 128h, *obv., variety without hadha al-dirham and without inner marginal circle*, 2.88g (Wurtzel -; Klat 83.b, *same reverse die*), *small edge mark, very fine or better, extremely rare*

£2,500-3,000

`Abdallah b. Mu`awiya was an `Alid rebel and one of several claimants to the Imamate after the death of `Ali's grandson, Abu Hashim. In 127h he rebelled against the Umayyads and soon controlled the important city of Kufa. Attacked by the Umayyad governor of Iraq, `Abdallah b. Mu`awiya left Kufa for Isfahan, later establishing himself, as this coin testifies, in Istakhr. At the height of his power he controlled large areas of Jibal, Ahwaz, Fars and Kirman, but was decisively beaten in 129h by the Umayyad general `Amir b. Dubara. He fled to Khurasan, where he was executed in 130h on the orders of the Abbasid general Abu Muslim.



#22
Revolutionary Period, `Abdallah b. Mu`awiya, dirham, Jayy 129h, 2.86g (Wurtzel 17; Klat 270.a), *old scratches on both sides, about very fine* £200-300



#23
Revolutionary Period, Abu Muslim, dirham, Marw 132h, 2.80g (Wurtzel 26; Klat 606), *good very fine, bright surfaces* £300-400

LATER ISLAMIC DYNASTIES



24
Abbasid, al-Musta`in (248-251h), dinar, Makka 248h, 4.10g (cf Sotheby's Geneva, 25 June 1985, lot 114), *about very fine and of the highest rarity* £15,000-20,000

See also enlargement on inside front cover.

All Abbasid coins bearing the name of the Holy City of Makka are rare and highly prized by collectors. This is the earliest known date for a dinar of this mint, although a handful of extremely rare dirhams with dates in the early 200s are also known.



25
Abbasid, al-Muktafi (289-295h), dinar, Misr 293h, 4.18g (Cairo 1346), *good extremely fine* £200-250

Although not a particularly rare type this example is in outstanding condition.



26
Abbasid, al-Radi (322-329h), dinar, Qumm 325h, 2.55g (Markov p.55, 1061), *on a ragged flan but fine to good fine, a rare mint* £400-500



27
Abbasid, al-Radi, dinar, Hamadhan 326h, 4.15g (cf Morton & Eden auction 14, 25-26 May 2005, lot 578), *very fine* £250-300



28
Abbasid, al-Radi, dinar, Ardabil 327h, with letter *jim* in lower obverse field, 4.31g (cf Baldwin's Islamic Coin Auction 10, 20 July 2005, lot 135, *same obverse die*), *centres weak, very fine and very rare* £800-1,200



29
Abbasid, al-Muttaqi (329-333h), dinar, Baysh 334h (*sic*), 2.78g (SICA X, 7, *same dies*), *slightly weakly struck from rusty dies, good very fine for issue and very rare*
 £2,000-3,000

This is a posthumous issue of al-Muttaqi from the Yemeni mint of Baysh.



30
Abbasid, al-Mansur (136-158h), dirham, al-Hashimiya 138h, 2.90g (Lowick 1077), *very fine and scarce, the first year of issue for the mint*
 £250-300



31
Abbasid, al-Rashid (170-193h), dirham, Misr 181h, *obv.*, annulets apparently O oo O O oo O, *rev.*, citing Ja`far b. Yahya, 2.95g (cf Lowick 503-504), *faint scratch on obverse and some dirt adhering, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare, this variety apparently unrecorded*
 £500-600



32

Abbasid, Zubayda, wife of Harun al-Rashid, dirham, al-Hada'iq Dhat Bahjat 185h, *obv.* margin, mint/date formula; in field: Qur'an XV, 46-47: 'Enter in peace and tranquility: we shall cast out any grudge which may remain in their hearts,' *rev.* margin: 'Among the things ordered by the Mother of the Heir to the Caliphate at the hands of Yasir, a blessing from God'; in field: Qur'an XV, 47-48: 'They will sit on thrones facing each other like brothers, no weariness will come upon them, nor will they ever be sent away', 2.94g (cf Spink auction 172, 31 March 2005, lot 337), *lightly toned, very fine or better and extremely rare* £3,000-3,500

The mint on this remarkable coin translates as 'The Glorious Gardens,' and this issue seems to represent the only occurrence of this mint name in the coinage record. Exactly where the Glorious Gardens were located is difficult to determine, although we should presumably be looking for an established Abbasid mint-town where Zubayda and the court of Harun al-Rashid spent some time. Two possible candidates are Madinat al-Salam (Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid state) and al-Rafiq, where al-Rashid established his residence and built a new palace in the early 180s. The Spink cataloguer noted that the annulet pattern is identical on dirhams struck at al-Muhammadiya in the same year (Lowick 1835-1836), but this seems an unlikely residence for Zubayda at the period.

This type is also unique in its choice of Qur'anic verses in the fields, which can plausibly be related to the question of Harun al-Rashid's succession. By describing herself as 'Mother of the heir to the caliphate', Zubayda establishes her own status and authority, while her choice of religious quotations emphasizes brotherly unity at a time when factions were already developing around the young princes al-'Amin and al-Ma'mun.

The identity of Yasir is not known, although his name also appears on a dirham of Zubayda struck at the unlocated mint of al-Kamiliya in 184h.



33

Abbasid, al-Ma'mun (193-218h), dirham, Samarqand 202h, citing al-Rida, 3.18g (Album 224 RR; Lowick 2678), *good very fine* £250-300

In an attempt to reconcile Sunnis and Shi'ites, al-Ma'mun named the Shi'ite Imam 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida as heir to the caliphate. Unfortunately, al-Rida died shortly afterwards (probably in 203 or 204h) and al-Ma'mun's bold plan came to nothing.



34

Ikhshidid, Muhammad b. Tughj (323-334h), dinar, Filistin 333h, *obv.*, Abu Mansur bin / amir al-mu'minin, *rev.*, al-Muttaqi lillah / al-Ikhshid, 3.45g (Lavoix 49), *traces of old mount on edge, fine and rare* £300-400



35

Ikhshidid, `Ali b. al-Ikhshid (349-355h), dinar, Misr 353h, with letter ς (for Kafur) in lower obverse field, 4.15g (Lavoix 62), *about uncirculated, with lustrous fields* £300-400

A Nubian slave of Muhammad b. Tughj, Kafur was appointed regent to his sons Abu'l-Qasim and `Ali. On `Ali's death in 355h Kafur became sole ruler, although most of his dinars lack his full name. A great patron of the arts, Kafur was also a capable and successful general who was able to repel the eastward advances of the Fatimids and to keep the Hamdanid rulers of Syria in check.



36

Ikhshidid, `Ali b. al-Ikhshid, dinar, Filistin 355h, similar type to the last, 3.51g (BMC II, 239), *a slightly weak striking showing evidence of rust on the reverse die, about extremely fine for issue* £400-600



37

Ikhshidid, Ahmad b. `Ali (357-358h), dinar, Filistin 358h, citing al-Husayn b. `Ubaydallah (governor of Tabariya) and Tughj (probably Tughj b. Juff, founder of the Ikhshidid dynasty), 3.85g (Lavoix 64, *same rev. die*), *areas of weak striking on both sides, about uncirculated and rare* £600-800

Ahmad b. `Ali came to power on the death of Kafur in 357h. Described as a weak and ineffectual ruler, his short reign was ended when the Fatimids under Jawhar took control of Egypt.



38

Ikhshidid, Ahmad b. `Ali, dinar, Filistin 358h, citing al-Husayn b. `Ubaydallah alone, 3.02g (Lavoix 63), *extremely fine for issue with some lustre, rare* £600-800



39

Fatimid, al-Hakim (386-411h), dinar, Dimashq 409h, 3.89g (Miles, *Fatimid* -; cf BMC IV, 87 for a similar coin dated 404h), *centres a little weak on both sides, almost very fine and rare* £1,000-1,500



40

Crusader County of Tripoli, bezant, imitating a Fatimid dinar of al-Mustansir, 'Trablus' 465h (mint-name slightly blundered), with three propeller-shaped ornaments in borders of fields on both sides, 3.88g (cf Metcalf 484), *area of coppery colouration in centre of reverse, very fine and unusual* £300-400

The calligraphy on this coin is more angular than on regular Fatimid issues. While the legends are not fully literate they demonstrate a higher standard of Arabic than is typically found on comparable Crusader imitations. Interestingly, the first part of the mint/date formula is much more blundered than the mint and date themselves; the mint-name is very close to a correct version of 'Trablus' while the date is accurately rendered in full.



(enlarged x1½)

‡41

Batinite Rulers of Alamut, `Ala al-din Muhammad III (618-653h), fractional dirham, *`Ala al-din / wa'l-din // al-mawlana / al-`azam*, 1.95g (Album 1921A RRR), *reverse legend partly off flan, almost very fine and very rare* £1,000-1,500



42

Ottoman, Bayezid II (886-918h / AD1481-1512), sultani, Serez 886h, 3.51g (Pere 103), *very fine to good very fine, rare* £1,000-1,200



43

Ottoman, Selim III (1203-1222h / AD1789-1807), sultani, Jaza`ir 1210h, 3.40g (cf Artuk 1909 [dated 1216h]), *evenly struck, very fine or better* £300-350



44

Ottoman, `Abd al-Aziz (1277-1293h / AD1861-1876), guinea, Misr 1277/4, 8.52g (Pere 921), *extremely fine* £250-300



45

Ottoman, Muhammad V (1327-1336h / AD1909-1918), lira, Brusa 1327/1, 7.22g (Pere 1004), *almost extremely fine* £250-300



46

Saffarid, Khalaf b. Ahmad (Second Reign, 360-369h), dinar, Sijistan 362h, *obv.*, *la ilaha illa Allah / Muhammad rasul Allah / al-Ta`i lillah / Khalaf b. Ahmad / `adl, rev.*, Qur`an 112 (complete, including the prefatory *qull huwa* omitted on the Umayyad coinage), 4.63g (cf Album A1417 = Sotheby's, 28 May 1987, lot 881 [with different legends and dated 364h]), *struck from rusty dies and with matt surfaces, very fine to good very fine and extremely rare, apparently the second published dinar of this ruler* £1,500-2,000

Khalaf b. Ahmad, described by historians as a man of great learning and honour, ruled Sijistan at various periods from 352h until the province was conquered by Mahmud of Ghazna in 393h. His grip on Sijistan was never completely secure, and his only other published dinar (dated 364h) acknowledges the support of the Samanid ruler Mansur b. Nuh as well as citing the Abbasid caliph.

Mansur b. Nuh is not mentioned on the present piece, whose legends are very different. The obverse names Khalaf and the caliph al-Ta`i while the inscriptions on the reverse are purely religious in nature, comprising the entirety of Qur`an CXII. This legend is generally associated with the Umayyads, who used it on the reverse of their post-Reform silver dirhams, although it also occurs infrequently on issues of the Buwayhids and Samanids (see the following lot). Why Khalaf b. Ahmad should have chosen to place it on this piece remains a mystery.



47

Samanid, Nuh b. Nasr (331-343h), dinar, al-Muhammadiya 331h (*sic*), legends similar to Miles, *Rayy* 172 but arranged in three lines across both fields, 4.27g (Spink Taisei auction 34, 19 June 1990, lot 361, *same dies*), *small edge mark, good fine and a rare type* £300-400

Like the previous lot, this type is exceptional in bearing Qur`an CXII, here placed on the obverse. The year is somewhat problematic, since the coin cites the Abbasid al-Mustakfi who did not become caliph until 333h – two years after the date on this coin. However, it is difficult to interpret the date legend differently; the word for 'thirty' is clearly and correctly written, and while 'one' is rendered as *'ahd* (i.e. without the final *alif maqsura*) the final *dal* is extremely clear, which appears to preclude other readings.



48

Kurdish Ruler of Adharbayjan, Daysam b. Ibrahim (c.326-341h), dinar, al-Maragha 329h, 4.50g (Album A1484 RRR), *small modern test-cut on edge, slightly wavy flan, very fine and rare* £400-600

Daysam b. Ibrahim was a half-Kurdish warlord who controlled areas of Azerbaijan at various periods in the first half of the fourth century Hijri.



49

Buwayhid, Imad al-dawla (322-338h), dinar, al-Muhammadiya 337h, 3.89g (Treadwell Mu337G), *very fine*

£200-300



50

Buwayhid, Rukn al-dawla (335-366h), medallionic portrait 'dirham,' in silvered bronze, al-Muhammadiya 351h, *obv.*, in six lines: *la ilaha illa Allah / wahdahu la sharik lahu / Muhammad rasul Allah / al-Ta'i lillah / Rukn al-dawla / abu Ali Buwayh*, mint/date formula around, apparently with *min hijra nabawiya* (or similar) after the date, *rev.*, facing portrait bust of Rukn al-dawla wearing ornate robe and a winged Sasanian-style crown, Pahlawi legends 'May the glory increase of the King of Kings' to either side, 14.26g (cf Miles, G.C., 'A Portrait of the Buyid Prince Rukn al-Dawla,' *ANS Museum Notes* 11, 1964, pp. 283-293), *pierced above bust and with traces of solder from an earlier mount, otherwise generally fine and extremely rare* £700-1,000

See also enlargement on inside back cover.

This remarkable piece is almost identical to that published by Miles (*op. cit.*, pp. 283-285), except that this was made of silver and described as a dinar in the mint/date formula. In other respects, the legends on the two are virtually identical. The concluding phrase following the date is not easy to read, but appears to support Miles's suggestion of something similar to *min hijra nabawiya*, 'of the Hijra of the Prophet.' Miles thought that the coin might have been gilded at some stage, in which case his silver-gilt 'dinar' would correlate well with the present silvered bronze 'dirham'.

Because of contact wear it is difficult to tell conclusively whether this piece was struck or made by casting, but in our opinion it was almost certainly cast. This makes it difficult to date and also raises questions as to its status. One might expect that a major Buwayhid mint such as al-Muhammadiya would have produced medallions of this type by striking. The existence of splendid epigraphic multiple dirham struck there in 387h (Treadwell Mu387c) shows that the mint could and did produce such pieces by this method, although it does not necessarily follow from this that the mint could not produce cast pieces also.

Whatever the method of manufacture, there are good reasons for believing that this piece may date from the Buwayhid period, possibly from the reign of Rukn al-dawla. It has clearly been extensively worn, to the extent it has been mounted (at least once) and also pierced, probably after a mount wore out or broke. Unlike other Islamic coins, whose religious quotations are not necessarily closely associated with one particular dynasty and which might therefore be worn long after they were made, this piece is highly specific to the Buwayhids and to Rukn al-Dawla in particular. It can therefore be argued that a portrait medallion of this type would probably not be worn after the fall of the dynasty, unlike a piece worn in order to display religious verses.



51

Mongol Great Khans, Ogedai (624-639h), dinar, Balad Kurraman nd, *obv.*, (in Arabic) 'In the city of Kurraman,' *rev.*, (in Persian), 'Whoever does not accept this coin is a sinner (*gunaghar*)', 3.17g, *partly flat-struck on both sides, otherwise very fine or better and apparently unpublished* £500-700

Comparable coins with threatening messages are known in both silver and silvered copper. A group of 30 silver-washed dirhams of Samarqand dated 630h was published by Fedorov (Fedorov, M., 'A Hoard of 630 AR Samarqand Dirhams with Threatening Legend,' *ONS Newsletter* 158, 1998/1999, p.8). Because these coins were highly debased, Fedorov took the view that their legends represented an attempt by the Mongols to force the local population to accept these silver-washed dirhams at a value much higher than their silver content. In the case of the present dinar, however, this explanation seems less likely; although made of relatively pale gold it is not obviously more debased than many previous issues from the area. An alternative theory might be that the Mongols hoped to generate revenue by declaring that only their new gold coins would be accepted as valid, compelling people to bring their old dinars to the mint where the authorities could charge a recoinage fee.



52

Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id (716-736h), dinar, Nishapur 722h, type D, 6.90g (Album 2202), *good very fine*

£250-300



53

Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id (716-736h), dinar, Hamadhan 722h, type D, 8.47g (Album 2202), *very fine to good very fine*

£250-300



54

Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id, dinar, Arran 726h, type F, 7.65g (Album 2208), *struck off-centre, almost very fine and scarce*

£250-300



55

Ilkhanid, Queen Sati Beg (739-741h), dinar, Shiraz 739h, 6.65g (type as Album 2231 [silver]), *wavy flan, very fine and extremely rare*
£1,500-2,000

On this type, Sati Beg's titles are given in the masculine form *al-sultan al-'adil* rather than as the grammatically correct *al-sultana al-'adila*. The mint-name is not completely clear; the formula appears to read *duriba Shiraz fi sanat...* but it is conceivable that the syllable read here as the preposition *fi* is in fact part of a longer, unread mint-name.



56

Safavid, Shah Abbas I (995-1038h), ashrafi, Tehran, date off flan, 4.52g, *with flat areas on both sides but good very fine for issue and a very rare mint*

£200-250

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